

# Reinvention Roundtable

Helping Federal Workers Create A Government That Works Better and Costs Less



Linda Frost, Social Security teleservice representative, flashes the same world-class smile she shows on SSA's customer service booklet, held by President Clinton at the White House ceremony on September 7. SSA's world-class phone service was highlighted in the Vice President's book, "Common Sense Government."

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## Vice President Presents "Common Sense Government" to President in White House Ceremony

At a ceremony on the White House south lawn on September 7, Vice President Gore presented President Clinton with a report describing what federal workers have accomplished in the second year of reinventing government.

"The entire government has been doing the hard work of changing," Gore told 100 special guests from the private sector and government, including federal workers mentioned in the report. "Common sense government is making a comeback," he said.

*Common Sense Government: Works Better & Costs Less*, the National Performance Review's third major report, highlights significant progress made by federal agencies since the initial report was issued exactly two years earlier.

Accepting the report, President Clinton said, "There's nothing quite like our reinvention progress in the history of modern American government." He thanked federal employees for their contributions, noting "...they have worked very, very hard at this difficult job, and they have done it remarkably well."

*Continued on page 8*

## Innovation Pays!

### Six Federal Programs Win \$100,000 Each

Six federal programs have won the coveted Innovations in American Government Award sponsored by the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Vice President Gore presented the awards at a gala awards dinner in Washington, DC on October 26. The six federal programs joined nine state and local programs as awardees. This is the first year that federal programs could compete. Winners are honored for their efforts to forge new and highly effective approaches to programs and policies that meet public needs.

"Let's give them a cheer," the Vice President said.

From 1,451 applicants, 30 federal programs were chosen as semi-finalists and 10 as finalists. *Continued on page 10*





## Reinvention Roundtable

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### National Performance Review

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### Please Share

We are using various mailing lists to distribute electronic and paper copies of this newsletter. The *Roundtable* is on Internet World Wide Web. Type <http://www.npr.gov>, click on *Newsroom*, then look for *Roundtable*. We hope you will copy this newsletter like mad and distribute it to as many people as possible, both inside and outside government. We also want you to share your reinvention stories with us. Send them to the editor.

### How to Order Bulk Copies

Reinvention Roundtable is published quarterly. The most economical way for federal organizations to get bulk copies is to share costs by "riding" our printing requisition for each issue. We estimate the cost to be about 20 cents each. Ask your agency's printing officer at headquarters or call Steve Jewell at (202) 395-7680.

### In a Hurry for Reinvention News?

We also publish *Reinvention Express*, a two-page information sheet that we distribute by e-mail or FAX. It has hot news, satellite broadcast information, announcements, and mini reinvention stories. FAX your e-mail address and FAX number to Pat Wood at (202) 632-0390.

### Next Issue:



Working on the Change Gang  
at Energy



## Open Letter to Federal Employees President and Vice President: Calling Federal Workers Non-Essential Is Just Plain Wrong

*Out of concern about the term "non essential" workers, President Clinton and Vice President Gore released an open letter to federal employees on November 22 following the first government furlough. The letter was released first to the media and then relayed by e-mail and fax networks government-wide. Here is the text of the letter.*

We are proud of the people who work for the federal government. Any Fortune 100 company would be lucky to have such a work force. Your work makes all Americans more safe, free, and prosperous. We are glad you are all back on the job.

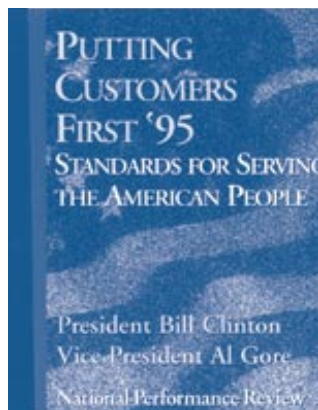
We know it hasn't been easy for you, wondering when and if you would get your next pay check. And many of you had to bear the indignity of being called "non-essential," some by government critics, some even by your own supervisors. Calling furloughed workers non-essential is deeply offensive and just plain wrong. The law forced us to furlough 800,000 workers whose jobs were not of an emergency nature. The law says nothing about "essential."

No one could say that medical research is non-essential. Or helping Americans go to college. Or rehabilitating a million disabled Americans. Or supporting the widows and orphans of veterans. Or keeping our drinking water safe. Or recruiting new volunteers for the armed forces. Or any of the long list of essential government activities that had to be temporarily suspended. In the short term, they were not emergencies, so the law prohibited them. But they remain clearly essential.

You all know that the law under which most of the government is operating expires on December 15th, and the debate that led to the November shut down is not over. We can't promise you that your jobs and your lives won't be interrupted again. Too much is at stake for America. If you are held hostage again, we know you would not want us to forfeit the nation's future as ransom.

So, until this issue is settled the way we settle great issues in a democracy—through peaceful debate and compromise—you remain good people caught in what Churchill called "the worst system of government devised by the wit of man, except for all the others." And when it is settled, it is you federal workers who will once again carry out the will of the people, who will once again make it possible for America to be the winner. We salute you, and we thank you. ★

## Agencies Put Customers First



Federal agencies are serious about delivering a customer-driven government, according to the National Performance Review's recently published report, *Putting Customers First '95*.

*USA Today* said, "Government: New improved, user-friendly. Under the Gore plan, the customer comes first (Dec 9)."

The report contains standards for 214 organizations, up from three in 1993 and 150 in 1994, according to NPR's Candy Kane.

"There is noticeable improvement in standards submitted this year. Agencies are more responsive to their customers," she said.

Standards provide a statement, clearly understood by the customer, of the quality they can expect for the services provided by the agency. Examples? If you visit the National Archives and Records Administration, their standard is "Within 15 minutes of walking in, you'll have either the information or the help you need." Interact with FedWorld? Expect your on-line transaction to be complete in seven seconds.

### Standards Equal to the Best in Business

President Clinton's 1993 Executive Order called for standards that are equal to the best in business. "Today's standards are based on what is achievable today, with an eye on raising the bar in the future," Kane said.

Consider the Department of Veterans Affairs. In 1994 they announced that veterans will wait no more than 30 minutes to see a benefits counselor. This year's standards call for a 20-minute wait. VA, on its way to becoming the "best in business" is working furiously to virtually eliminate any wait.

How do agencies know what customers want? They talk to them. Kane points to the National Park Service as an agency that has a "total package." Visit a National Park. You'll find comment cards and you may even participate in a visitor study. The Park Service uses the data to refine their standards and to modify their procedures and operating plans within their allotted budget. You will notice a difference in the things that park customers care about, such as cleaner restrooms and more clearly written displays.

### For More Information

To get a copy of *Putting Customers First '95*, call NPR's customer service desk, (202) 632-0150. The report is also on the Web at <http://www.npr.gov>. ★

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To get help with standards, call Candy Kane at (202) 632-0410.

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## Going Beyond Promises

Are federal agencies living up to the customer service they have promised to deliver?

One way to find out is to ask customers what they think and to publish the results, as did Interior's National Park Service. This agency is publishing the results of its regular surveys of visitors to national parks.

This year's "report card," *Serving the Visitor, 1995*, shows that overall, 77 percent of park service visitors say service is good or very good, but there are opportunities for improvement. ★



A visitor's comment:

Each time we use any of the facilities  
at the park we are happy with them.  
Over the years I have seen several  
improvements. Especially nice is the new  
restroom facility. Thanks!

## Electronic Government is Here

Electronic government is not just a dream for the future. It's here, and it's growing dramatically every day. It's helping Americans connect with their government and helping federal workers connect with their state and local partners. It's helping everyone connect with the global community-at-large.

Government information storehouses that used to be accessible to a select few are now instantly available to anyone, anytime, electronically. Even people who have never sat at a computer in their lives are exposed to the jargon: online, Internet, the Web, homepage, modem, e-mail, software, information highway. "Electronic" is fast becoming attached to a host of words. We speak of electronic democracy, electronic commerce, electronic bulletin boards, electronic this, electronic that.

### First Electronic Payment Was 20 Years Ago

In November, pioneers in the electronic revolution—including Treasury and the Social Security Administration—celebrated the 20th anniversary of electronic payments. What started as direct deposit of wages and benefits ultimately became a full range of electronic funds transfers over the years. Because of the volume of such payments, it was government that pushed much of the private sector onto the electronic highway. For more information on electronic funds transfers, call Susan Alvarez at (202) 874-7076.

Today electronic government also means that customers can get information and services faster, agencies can streamline operations and work together across organizational stovepipes, and government can save big bucks. In short, electronic government works better and costs less. Here are some examples.

- **Transit Authorities** Hundreds of Federal Transit Administration grantees—states and transit agencies—can submit reports and make annual certifications electronically via a toll-free connection. In a successful pilot, twenty organizations applied for grants and FTA reviewed and awarded the grants electronically. Contact Carol Kerr at (202) 366-7951.
- **Truckers** Trucks and buses with good safety records may travel I-5 in California and I-75 from Florida to Ontario without stopping at weigh/inspection stations except for random checks. The Federal Highway Administration and its partners developed transponders for vehicles so that states can electronically identify, weigh, and check vehicle registrations. Contact Doug McKelvey, (202) 366-0950.
- **Seafarers** Mariners get more timely—and often critical—weather forecasts and navigational warnings without human intervention thanks to communications control software developed by



Ten regional and one headquarters team at the Federal Transit Administration each won Hammer Awards for their pioneer work in electronic grants management. Here's the headquarters team with Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena and FTA Administrator Gordon J. Linton (second and third from top right). Hiram Walker, who directed the nationwide effort, holds the Hammer Award.

the U. S. Coast Guard. Contact Lt. Cdr. Jay Hickman at (703) 313-5526.

- **Businesses** For a small access fee, businesses can access STAT-USA, Commerce's online world-wide, up-to-the-minute business and trade information and research gathered by more than 50 federal agencies, including posts overseas. Contact Ken Rogers at (202) 482-0434.
- **Health Providers** State and local public health workers and officials, lab technicians, hospital staff, and academic researchers can get quick and easy access to more than 30 large public health data sets and databases, send and track requests for analysis, and use e-mail to exchange messages with each other and with the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta through an online system called CDC WONDER. Contact Jim Seligman, (404) 639-3381.
- **Job Hunters** Federal job hunters with a PC and a modem can dial 912-757-3100 to get the Office of Personnel Management's Federal Job Opportunities Board, an electronic bulletin board with federal job listings worldwide. The same database serves a job information phone line (912-757-3000) and touch screen PCs.

### Saves \$\$\$

Electronic government saves a bundle of money. Just ask the Optical Storage System Implementation Team at Agriculture's National Finance Center. They are replacing voluminous amounts of microfiche with a large mainframe-based optical storage system. First year savings are more than half a million dollars, completely covering the cost of buying and developing the system. The NFC is also implementing Electronic Data Interchange and is moving into providing information on CD-ROM. To learn more, call Bill Dell at (504) 255-6575.

Electronic government saves money for customers, too. Ask the State of Vermont. That State bills the Federal Highway Administration electronically and gets paid by electronic deposit the same day. With millions of dollars at stake, every day gained means Vermont gets interest that would otherwise be lost. The program, which won a Hammer Award for its intergovernmental team, has already expanded to 43 states. Call Tom Park at (202) 366-2845.

The Defense Personnel Supply Center (See Innovations in American Government Award winners on page 10) makes it possible for its customers to buy brand-name commercial products at terrific prices directly from the manufacturer through a one-stop shopping electronic catalog. And the agency saves money on warehousing. Call Carl Rusnok at (215) 737-2311.

You'll find more stories about electronic government throughout this newsletter. ✦

## How CDC's WONDER Works

A local health department receives an urgent phone call from a hotel that has a guest with Legionnaires' disease. The health official uses CDC's WONDER database, to scan the full text of all recent articles pertaining to its prevention and control and uses the database to find the number of deaths per year from the disease.

The health official then uses WONDER to obtain the names and phone numbers of CDC experts in the control of Legionnaires' disease. A phone call to one of the experts yields practical information within minutes. The expert uses WONDER to e-mail materials that can be used immediately in responding to the situation. ✦

### What IRS Fans Are Saying

*"It's Saturday, April 15, 1995, and I was missing my Form 2441. Sure glad to find easy access at the last minute, even for a novice Net user such as myself! Thanks!!"*

*"Now this is a cool use of tax dollars! Excellent idea! Excellent execution! Keep up the good work!"*

*"I'd like to say that the information and forms that you provide online are a lifesaver! It's soooooo much easier than going through the mail, and saves paper."*

*"Thanks for the high tech solution to not having to fight it out at the post office. I love technology! Good luck in 1996!"*

*"Having tax forms available via the Internet is good government." ✪*

### IRS Gets Fan Mail. Really.

The Internal Revenue Service doesn't usually get a lot of fan mail, but during the last tax season they got a flood of thank you letters.

Taxpayers, tax practitioners, accountants, and attorneys may now get tax forms, instructions, and other information in minutes via the Internet or with just a computer and modem. In all, over 500 forms and 90 publications are available. Information is updated daily. IRS finds online services are less expensive than other methods of distributing forms.

IRS and FedWorld (part of Commerce's National Technical Information Services) staff joined forces to put together what quickly became the most popular service on the FedWorld electronic system. In its first month, the Internal Revenue Information Service increased FedWorld Internet traffic by 400 percent, and it wasn't even April!

In addition to a Hammer Award, IRS has received an award from *Government Computer News*, and *PC Computing Magazine* named IRS one of the top 101 Internet sites.

Here is how to access IRS forms:

- ▶ via modem, (703) 321-8020
- ▶ via Telnet, [fedworld.gov](http://fedworld.gov)
- ▶ via FTP, [ftp.fedworld.gov](ftp://ftp.fedworld.gov)
- ▶ via the World Wide Web, [ustreas.gov](http://ustreas.gov) or [fedworld.gov](http://fedworld.gov)

### On the Other Hand, Forget the Form

Next spring, however, about 20 million taxpayers in 50 states who use the 1040-EZ form can forget the form and file on their touch-tone phone. It takes about six minutes and **the phone system does the math**. It requires no contact with any person at IRS, and the refund comes within 21 days.

For more information, call Linda Wallace, (202) 927-4288. ✪



### Watch Out, Home Shopping Channel. GSA Advantage! Is Here

What if you could cut the cost of processing a federal procurement to a few dollars? What if you could order furniture, computers, supplies, and services from your computer—and ordering was as easy as using the home shopping channel? What if you could also pick up the phone and negotiate a volume discount directly with vendors?

You can. You may purchase goods and services via the General Services Administration's GSA Advantage!, an online shopping service on the Internet. In October, its virtual doors opened on about 13,000 items; over the next 24 months everything from batteries and cleaning supplies to fire fighting and rescue equipment on GSA schedules will be phased in—four million products in all.

#### Virtually Real Beats Really Real

Because of the time, staff, and paperwork involved, it costs between \$40 and \$200 to process a single traditional government purchase order. "Electronic ordering is easier, faster, and cheaper," says Bill Gormley, Assistant Commissioner for Acquisition at GSA's Federal Supply Service. You'll find GSA Advantage! on GSA's World Wide Web site at <http://www.gsa.gov>.

#### What You'll Need

You're set to go if your office is on the Internet, has Netscape (an Internet "browser" that provides for visuals on screen), and has an authorized holder of an IMPAC credit card. You don't have to worry about violating federal acquisition rules. They're built into the new system. You also don't have to worry about security. "If the customer has Netscape, it locks into the Netscape secure commerce server, which encrypts their card number," says GSA's Ed O'Hare. "Agencies could also pay with their GSA account."



#### No One Will Be Left Out

GSA also plans to make the service available by modem. However, if you work in a remote location without a PC, you will have to wait a while longer. Eventually you'll be able to shop by phone. "The system is Internet accessible, but not Internet dependent," O'Hare says.

For more information, leave a message on GSA's voice mail hot line, (703) 305-7359, or send an e-mail to [gsa.advantage@gsa.gov](mailto:gsa.advantage@gsa.gov). ✉



### New Online U.S. Business Advisor Links Business to Government

The U.S. Business Advisor is a one-stop electronic link between government and business.

*USA Today* ran a story on the new service when the President unveiled it in June at the White House Conference on Small Business and it got 50,000 hits in an hour. In time it will contain all the federal regulations, information, and services that a business could ever need to know. It's on the World Wide Web at <http://www.business.gov>.

The Advisor, developed cooperatively by many federal agencies, is in a pilot test phase. A task force headed by Deputy Commerce Secretary David Barram and co-chaired by SBA Administrator Philip Lader is working with business customers to develop the final design, contents, and services and report back to the President by December 15. It's supported by Yale University, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and the White House Conference on Small Business.

The task force needs to know what business services your agency is planning to put online and how you are going to do it. It also needs to know your highest volume business transactions, even if you have no plans to put these online. Contact John Huang at the National Performance Review by e-mail at [john.huang@npr.gsa.gov](mailto:john.huang@npr.gsa.gov) or phone (202) 632-1179. ✉

### "Almost Like Miracles"

Philip K. Howard, best-selling business author of *The Death of Common Sense*, wrote the foreword to the commercial version of the Vice President's report published by Random House in October. Howard writes that the book "is loaded with stories that, to those familiar with government, are almost like miracles....When Americans are released from rigid and mindless rules, as the many stories...make clear, we can accomplish things we had almost given up on. *Common Sense Government* is an important event for America. I urge all Americans to read it and then demand it in their dealings with government."

In reviewing the Vice President's report, quality guru Joseph M. Juran lauds the results achieved by the reinventing government undertaking. "Our government people are quite as creative and gifted as their industrial counterparts," he said. "The system may be stupid but the people are not."

### The Miracle Workers

The report's reinvention stories illustrate what these creative federal workers and their agencies are doing to bring common sense, an entrepreneurial spirit, a customer focus, and compassion to government. Here are a few examples:



Linda Frost

- **Ringing Success** When Dalbar Financial Services, North America's biggest financial news publisher, went looking for the best 800-number customer service in their World-Class Benchmarks survey this year, they didn't find it at L.L. Bean, Disney World, or Nordstrom. They found it at Social Security. Dalbar rated attitude, helpfulness, knowledge, time to answer, and time to reach a personal representative. While SSA lagged in time on hold, it was tops in the nation for being courteous, knowledgeable, and efficient. The agency is training 3,300 more people on its own staff to cut that "on-hold" problem. Contact Jack McHale at (410) 966-7758.
- **No Hold Up at the Bank** A Small Business Administration program envisioned by Rodney Martin in San Antonio provides a quick application procedure for loans up to \$100,000. The entire SBA process takes about three days, start to finish, and requires only a simple one-page form. Compare that to the earlier 78-page application process and 90-day review. Contact Rodney Martin at (210) 229-5900.
- **Going Places** The National Security Agency's travel management operations, a reinvention lab, was selected this year by *Business Travel News*, the newspaper of the travel industry, as one of the four best in the country—right up there with Hewlett-Packard, Bankers Trust, and Texas Instruments. NSA had found that its travel operation took 79 days to process the paperwork for the average business trip and cost more than \$8 million a year to process.

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"Our government people are quite as gifted as their industrial counterparts"—*Quality guru Joseph J. Juran*

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To find a better way, they visited Apple Computer, IBM, Texas Instruments and other companies. Thanks to this benchmarking, NSA reduced the processing time by 93 percent, travelers' form-

filing time by 74 percent, and total processing costs by 75 percent. The new process, including software that is being developed, is a prototype that can be used by other agencies. Contact Chip Mahan at (301) 688-3023.

- **Service Ace** On July 1, 1995—Saturday evening on a holiday weekend—Leah Lennox, a 16-year-old member of the U.S. National Tennis Team, was on her way to a competition in Europe. Then her purse, with her passport inside, was stolen at JFK Airport in New York. After airport officials told her father that there was no way she would be permitted to leave the country, he called the State Department in Washington, D.C. He reached David Gooding, who abandoned his weekend plans and spent the next several hours working with Leah's airline to permit her to depart while the passport issue was being resolved. She was on a flight the same night. Contact Suzanne Lawrence at (202) 647-1488.



- **Out of Line** Speaking of airports, June 19, 1995 was not a good day at Miami International. Incoming flights swamped the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Delays in checking passports and clearing passengers approached three hours. Fist fights erupted among tired, frustrated travelers. Meanwhile, more arriving passengers sat fuming in their planes.

To prevent future occurrences, local INS director Dan Cadman and local Customs Service director Lynn Gordon formed a coalition with their partners in the American Federation of Government Employees and the National Treasury Employees Union. In two weeks of brainstorming, the airlines, airport officials, and several government agencies worked out an entirely new passenger handling system.

Put to the test at the height of the vacation travel season two weeks later, the three-hour waits disappeared. "It's the first time I've seen the airlines and the agencies cheering each other and patting each other on the back," says Art Torno, managing director for American Airlines in Miami. But now the airlines had a new problem: passengers were clearing Immigration so quickly they were reaching the baggage hall before their bags! Contact Michael Sheehan at (305) 536-4126. ★



## Highlights

In just two years, here's where we are with reinventing government:

- Agencies have completed one-third of NPR's original 1993 recommendations; nearly all the rest are underway.
- More than 200 agencies have published customer service standards.
- More than 200 reinvention labs are testing innovative ideas.
- About 400 labor-management partnerships are developing common sense approaches to government.
- \$58 billion of NPR's \$108 billion in savings proposed in 1993 are in the bank, and agencies' reinvention efforts have saved an additional \$10 billion beyond projected savings.
- Federal employment dropped more than 160,000; reductions are nearly one year ahead of schedule.
- Federal workers are sending 16,000 pages of obsolete regulations to the scrap heap and reworking 31,000 more pages, of 86,000 pages of regulations reviewed.
- Reduced regulatory and administrative burdens will save the public nearly \$28 billion.
- Agencies are closing nearly 2,000 field offices.
- Congress has enacted 36 NPR-related laws, including the biggest procurement streamlining bill ever, with a second in progress.

## It's on the Internet

The report is on the Internet. The World Wide Web address is <http://www.npr.gov/>. You may buy the government version from the Government Printing Office for \$16 and the Random House publication in book stores for \$12. ★

## Innovation Pays! continued from page 1

Finalists underwent a rigorous four-stage, six-month evaluation, including site visits.

Criteria included the degree to which an innovation can be replicated. The winners received a stipend of \$100,000 each, which most winners said they would use to help spread word of their innovations. Finalists received \$20,000 each. Federal winners are:

- **Occupational Safety and Health**

**Administration:** Its “Maine 200” program improves safety and health conditions in the workplace through employer initiatives and voluntary compliance. Company workers in 200 companies are finding and fixing 14 times as many hazards as OSHA. Maine 200 will expand to other states.

- **Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation:** Its Early Warning Program uses sophisticated analysis to detect transactions that might jeopardize underfunded private pension plans for millions of Americans.

- **Defense Personnel Support Center in Philadelphia (part of the Defense Logistics Agency):** Its National Defense on the Offense project connects consumers with suppliers of food, clothing and medicine when needed. Electronic ordering technology replaces a cumbersome system that stockpiled those items just in case they were needed.
- **Air Force Aerospace Guidance and Metrology Center:** Its Ozone-Depleting Chemical Elimination Program replaces chemical solvents with equally effective water-based cleaners.
- **Immigration and Naturalization Service:** Its Operations Jobs project in Dallas partners with businesses to help them detect illegal aliens in their employ and replace them with unemployed people who can work legally.
- **Bureau of Reclamation:** This 92-year-old dam-building agency transformed itself into a leading water resource management agency.



*Army Brig. Gen. Carl H. Freeman, Ron Ogburn (L) and Todd Baxley (R) inspect produce at the Defense Subsistence Office, Jacksonville, FL. Freeman commands the Philadelphia-based Defense Personnel Center; the Jacksonville DSO is one of its world-wide food-buying offices.*

Four other federal programs were finalists:

- **Department of Defense Civilian Assistance and Re-Employment Program:** Used outplacement, incentives, early retirement, and reorganization to reduce 110,000 employees with minimal involuntary layoffs.
- **Navy Multimedia Medical Language Translator:** Lap-top computer application allows health-care providers to communicate with patients who do not speak English.
- **Bureau of Labor Statistics Re-engineering Establishment Survey Data Collection Program:** PC-based system uses touchtone and voice recognition to collect data from 400,000 American businesses, giving policy makers nearly instantaneous access to accurate monthly employer data.
- **Department of Veterans Affairs Re-engineering Ambulatory Care Program:** Overhauled its health care delivery system at the Medical Center in Northport, New York.



### Is There a Ford In Your Future?

For information about the Innovations in American Government Award, call (617) 495-0558. ✦

## Reinvention Lab Conference Set for March 25-27

The National Performance Review will co-sponsor a federal reinvention lab conference at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, March 25-27, 1996.

Reinvention laboratories are innovative work teams that test reinventing government principles. Employees are empowered to experiment with radical new ways of doing business and to share their experiences across government.

In addition to the 200 existing labs, the conference is aimed at other government innovators, Hammer Award winners, GPRA pilots, reinvention "wannabes," and government officials who want to help remove barriers to innovative, entrepreneurial government.

### Vice President Asks Cabinet Heads to Support Conference

Vice President Gore has written the heads of cabinet departments and independent agencies asking them to support the conference. "If our Labs are to continue to thrive," the Vice President wrote, "they must begin to learn from each other. Common problems, successful solutions and strategies, and even mistakes can teach the rest of us how to change government."

The conference is also sponsored by Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, *Government Executive* Magazine, and the Council for Excellence in Government.

### For More Information

For more information, contact Laszlo & Associates, Inc., (202) 393-7022; FAX (202) 393-7027; or e-mail, govexec@laszlo.smart.net or <http://www.npr.gov>.

NPR contacts are Jeffrey Goldstein at (202) 632-0387, and Linda Walker at (404) 331-4762. ✦

## Mapping a Reinvention Route Defense Mapping Agency Chooses Road that Connects to Customers

Last July, the Defense Mapping Agency unrolled a new map—a reinvention road map that directly connects employees with customers and charts a course of improved service. The reinvented DMA is organized around core business processes and features newly formed Customer Support Teams (CST). Teams form partnerships with customers to plan, prioritize and produce products, services and information for the operational armed forces and other customers.

This customer-focused reinvention occurred after ten months of planning by an eight-person team that relied on suggestions from employees, customers, past and present DMA leaders, subject matter experts, and private sector firms. In addition to improving customer service, the agency also:

- Pruned management layers between producer and customer from 11 to three.
- Pared headquarters staff by almost fifty percent. Staff



*Roberta Lenczowski, Director, DMA Acquisition and Technology Group, accepts the DMA flag from Air Force Major General Philip W. Nuber at a ceremony on July 10 marking the "sunrise" of the reinvented DMA.*

became members of CSTs or moved to locations where the production work is actually done.

- Empowered customer support and production teams to get the job done.
- Reduced the practice of stockpiling prodigious quantities of mapsheets just in case they are needed. DMA is instead focusing on populating a database (accessible to customers) for just-in-time production.

### Mother of Reinvention

Operation Desert Storm was the necessity that became the mother of reinvention for DMA. During Desert Storm, agency employees produced in six months the equivalent of two years' normal production of its mapping and charting products and services. DMA reinvented itself to perform in peacetime the way it performed in a crisis. This means production time is halved for some maps.

DMA will receive the Vice President's Hammer Award. The agency's reengineering effort is a model for other agencies. If you're interested in a briefing or want more information, contact Terry Meehan, (703) 275-8409. ☒

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